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ABSTRACT

The editorials about four Vietnam War news events that appeared in five newspapers were examined for content, tone, page placement, and length to discover what trends in editorial coverage occurred. The 131 editorials that were examined appeared in the "New York Times," the "Los Angeles Times," the "Wall Street Journal," the "Chicago Tribune," and the "Washington Post" within 21 days of the following news events: the Tonkin Gulf incident, the 1968 Tet Offensive, President Nixon's 1969 "Vietnamization" announcement, and the fall of Saigon. Five major findings resulted from the content analysis: (1) The overall tone of the editorials was antiwar. (2) During the periods studied, the "New York Times" was consistently antiwar while the "Wall Street Journal" trended from antiwar to prowar and the other three newspapers trended from prowar to antiwar. (3) The newspapers were willing to take definite stands during the periods under study. (4) The paper that most clearly appeared to have changed its editorial opinion was the "Los Angeles Times." (5) The "New York Times" and the "Washington Post," both generally prolific in their editorials throughout the periods studied, inexplicably presented fewer items on the Tet Offensive than the other papers. The study also established the usefulness of the basic "Statistical Package for the Social Sciences" (SPSS) in newspaper content analysis. (RL)

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Theory and Methodology

AMERICAN NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS
ON THE VIETNAM WAR: AN
EXPERIMENTAL APPROACH TO
EDITORIAL CONTENT ANALYSIS

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Introduction

"Some of the correspondents who were there at the end wrote books about it, but I was not among them. The group to which I belonged was so personally traumatized that we have never written a line about Indochina since May 1, 1975."¹ Malcolm Browne, winner of the Pulitzer Prize in 1964 for his coverage of the Vietnam war for the Associated Press, wrote this harsh commentary. It is representative of the many mixed reactions to the performance of the American press during the Vietnam war. Just as harsh have been some of the charges leveled against the American news media in connection with coverage of the war.² While such charges may, in fact, be founded on emotional or political premises, the journalistic profession should respond to them with a sound appraisal of its actions during the charged period of American military involvement in Southeast Asia. Such an appraisal--to successfully evaluate criticism directed against the media--should be based on an objective methodology--one which cannot be construed as merely a self-serving strategy of defensiveness.

The present study was designed to test one such methodology. While limited in scope, it nevertheless points out a direction which others might follow. The purposes of the study were (1) to seek trends in editorials of selected American newspapers regarding the Vietnam war; (2) to test the applicability of the basic Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to this type of research; (3) to design a model for similar future studies using SPSS that could be accomplished by non-technically oriented individuals who, nevertheless, desired to use the computer as an aid.

Methodology

This study is a computer-aided analysis of the editorial content of selected American newspapers during the period of this country's most active

involvement in Vietnam, 1964 to 1975. Using quantitative methods, it traces and examines editorial trends as they developed from generally pro-war at the time of the North Vietnamese attack on the destroyer Maddox in the Tonkin Gulf (1964) to almost universally anti-war when Saigon was abandoned in 1975. The editorials have been analyzed to determine those words and themes which went into the classifying of an item as pro or anti-war. In order to produce a manageable set of data, it was decided to examine the editorials of five major newspapers regarding four significant incidents during the period under examination.

The New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Chicago Tribune, Washington Post, and Los Angeles Times were selected because of their wide geographic coverage and their positions over varying degrees of the political spectrum.³

The events examined are the Tonkin Gulf incident (Aug. 2, 1964), the 1968 Tet offensive (Jan. 31, 1968), President Nixon's 1969 "Vietnamization" announcement (May 14, 1969) and the fall of Saigon (April 30, 1975). These were chosen because of their overall importance to American involvement in the Vietnamese war.⁴

In order to establish a workable base of data from which to analyze reactions of the newspapers to the incidents, this study has examined editorial reaction for 21 days following each incident. While this time period was arbitrarily chosen in order to accommodate time limitations, research demonstrated that, except in the case of the fall of Saigon, editorial comment diminished very significantly after three weeks had elapsed.

In all, 131 editorials were examined and interpreted. A total of 23 variables were used to evaluate each editorial included in the study. (See Appendix A) The first 10 variables concerned such items as newspaper name,

date of editorial, size of editorial, overall tone, placement on the Op-Ed page, and number of pro-war, neutral, or anti-war themes contained in each editorial. The use of themes to determine overall tone was considered necessary in order to more objectively determine each editorial's content. A theme could consist of a phrase, a sentence, or one or more paragraphs. The most significant criterion in the determination of the parameters of a theme was the ability to infer a definitive tonal meaning from it. This criterion was also used in evaluating content.

The remaining 13 variables consisted of a group of words, preselected before analysis of the editorial's content and tone. No attempt was made to count the number of times that a selected word appeared in an editorial or to quantify grammatical modifiers used with the word. O.R. Holsti, in *Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities*, states that "to determine that an editorial used the term 'freedom' X number of times is a meaningless finding by itself, as is any other unrelated fact about communication content."⁵ He goes on to state, however, that if one chooses certain words in advance--words that contain force and meaning--and then checks to see if they appear or not, inferences may be drawn. The selected words for this study are listed in Appendix A and were applied to the editorials in question in the manner suggested by Holsti's methodology. In choosing these words, it was anticipated that they would appear with considerable frequency as they are words commonly used in connection with a wartime set of circumstances.

After coding, the information was tabulated and cross-tabulated using SPSS. This was used since one of the objectives of the study was to determine the adaptability of this package to a newspaper editorial content analysis. Statistical significance was noted on very few of the cross-tabulations but the

information did indicate many descriptive variations. These variations will be the subject of the following analyses and discussions.

Findings

Table 1, below indicates how the editorials were spread between the incidents.⁶

Table 1
Breakdown of Editorials by Newspaper and Incident

	<u>Total</u>		<u>Tonkin Gulf</u>		<u>1968 Tet Offensive</u>		<u>Nixon's Vietnamization</u>		<u>Fall of Saigon</u>	
Chicago Trib.	25	19.1%	6	24.0%	5	20.0%	3	12.0%	11	44.0%
Wall St. Jour.	17	13.0%	2	11.8%	1	5.9%	4	23.5%	10	58.8%
L.A. Times	17	13.0%	4	23.5%	4	23.5%	2	11.8%	7	41.2%
N.Y. Times	41	31.3%	11	26.8%	5	12.2%	12	29.3%	13	31.7%
Wash. Post	31	23.7%	11	35.5%	2	6.5%	9	29.0%	9	29.0%
	<u>131</u>		<u>34</u>		<u>17</u>		<u>30</u>		<u>50</u>	
	100%		26.0%		13.0%		22.9%		38.2%	

Source: SPSS frequencies run on all editorials in the study.

Looking at the five newspapers as a group, 114 (87.0%) of the editorials dealt with the three incidents other than the Tet offensive. Examination of the individual newspapers' "scores," and the editorials themselves was necessary in order to determine the reason for an apparently lesser interest in such an important happening. While not anticipated at the commencement of the study the answer to this question represented its first major finding. The cause of the skewed number of editorials which dealt with the Tet offensive is found by looking at the New York Times and the Washington Post.

While these two papers accounted for more than 55% of the total coverage sampled (Table 1), the combined total of seven editorials dealing with Tet

represented less than 10% of their coverage in the survey. Table 2 shows that it was only concerning the Tet offensive that the Times ran no pro-war items and the Post none that were anti-war.

The depth of the Times' editorializing on this incident was greater than that of the Post. In editorials on Feb. 1, 1968, both papers seemed to feel that the offensive was a last Communist push prior to beginning peace negotiations. The Times, in an anti-war tone, mentions the offensive as "further proof of the limitations of American power in Asia."⁷ It further stated that the offensive could not be the work of an enemy force whose morale is "sinking fast," that the United States could hardly be said to be "winning," and that substantially "more troops than the Administration (had) yet admitted" would be required in order to attain a "clear-cut military victory."⁸

The Post's first editorial on Tet was definitely more hawkish than the Times'. While warning that talk of an invasion in the context of the Viet Cong attacks was dangerous, possibly sounding like "a prelude for proposals of retaliation," the Post went on to state that American military officials had best be thinking of a different emphasis in their actions than simply "attrition of enemy forces in the hinterlands," possibly "a modified, more selective search-and-destroy policy." The paper concluded that its suggested alternatives had "been advanced publicly...by responsible men" but were unlikely to get a full hearing while we "are determined to find enemy failures in actions where the enemy, by its own known definition of its objectives, finds success."⁹

The other editorial run by the Post during the selected test period was on Feb. 3, 1968. It was definitely pro-war in tone, suggesting that the United States give no consideration to a cessation of its bombing attacks of the North while "the enemy is engaged in a great outburst of attacks all over South

Table 2
Trend of Overall Tone
Newspaper by Incident

	Total	Tonkin Gulf	1968 Tet Offensive	Nixon's Vietnamization	Fall of Saigon
<i>Chicago Tribune</i>					
Strongly anti	2) 20%	2) 33%	0) 20%	0) 33%	0) 9%
Anti-war	3)	0)	1)	1)	1)
Neutral	8	1	0	0	7
Pro-war	8) 48%	3) 50%	2) 80%	1) 67%	2) 27%
Strongly pro	4)	0)	2)	1)	1)
<i>Wall Street Journal</i>					
Strongly anti	4) 35%	0) 50%	1) 100%	0) 25%	3) 30%
Anti-war	2)	1)	0)	1)	0)
Neutral	4	1	0	1	2
Pro-war	5) 41%	0) 0%	0) 0%	2) 50%	3) 50%
Strongly pro	2)	0)	0)	0)	2)
<i>Los Angeles Times</i>					
Strongly anti	3) 24%	0) 0%	0) 0%	0) 0%	3) 57%
Anti-war	1)	0)	0)	0)	1)
Neutral	6	0	2	1	3
Pro-war	4) 41%	1) 100%	2) 50%	1) 50%	0) 0%
Strongly pro	3)	3)	0)	0)	0)
<i>New York Times</i>					
Strongly anti	15) 63%	1) 27%	2) 80%	9) 92%	3) 62%
Anti-war	11)	2)	2)	2)	5)
Neutral	10	6)	1	0	3
Pro-war	4) 12%	1) 18%	0) 0%	1) 8%	2) 15%
Strongly pro	1)	1)	0)	0)	0)
<i>Washington Post</i>					
Strongly anti	7) 42%	1) 18%	0) 0%	0) 33%	6) 89%
Anti-war	6)	1)	0)	3)	2)
Neutral	10	5	0	4	1
Pro-war	6) 26%	3) 36%	2) 100%	1) 22%	0) 0%
Strongly pro	2)	1)	0)	1)	0)

Source: SPSS crosstabulation run. Strong significance was noted in Chi-square calculations for the anti-war and neutral editorials. No meaningful significance was noted in Chi-square calculations relating newspaper and incident in any of the other "tone" classifications.

Vietnam."¹⁰ The Times, even though printing fewer than its generally high number of items demonstrated in this study, ran additional editorials on Feb. 2, 4, 8, and 11, 1968. All of these were anti-war; two strongly so. While determining quantitatively which of the newspapers were responsible for the decrease in editorial volume as it related to Tet, the data disclosed no hard evidence as to the reasons behind this decrease. It is possible, however, to infer that both of these highly committed newspapers felt that the Tet incident had caused clearly defined political lines to be drawn--lines upon which they had expressed their editorial opinions which required no further clarification.

The second major finding indicated by the data in the study was that the Chicago Tribune, the Los Angeles Times and Washington Post trended from pro-war to anti-war during the time frame covered, while the New York Times was rather consistently anti-war. The Wall Street Journal, on the other hand, ran counter to the other papers, going from anti-war to pro-war. Table 2 indicates that of the five papers, only the Journal ran more than 50% of its editorials with a pro-war tone after the fall of Saigon. The Tribune, which had always run more than 50% of its editorials on the pro-war side of the scoreboard, ran only three (27%) pro-war items. The Los Angeles Times ran none for the three-week period beginning April 30, 1975.

The third overall trend in the study is illustrated by Table 3, which analyzed editorial tone by incident. It shows 71% of the editorials to have been either above or below the "neutral line," indicating that the newspapers were willing to take a definite stand.

While eliciting the lowest overall amount of comment, Tet had a slightly greater polarizing effect. Fewer than 18% of the items on this incident were in the "neutral" column, closely followed by Nixon's Vietnamization with 20% clas-

sified as "neutral." The Tonkin Gulf incident, with over 38% of its editorials classified as "neutral," indicated the greatest amount of indecisiveness.

Table 3
Analysis of Overall Tone by Incident

	Total		Tonkin Gulf		1968 Tet Offensive		Nixon's Vietnamization		Fall of Saigon	
Strongly anti	31	23.7%	4	11.8%	3	17.6%	9	30.0%	15	30.0%
Anti-war	23	17.6%	4	11.8%	3	17.6%	7	23.3%	9	18.0%
Neutral	38	29.0%	13	38.2%	3	17.6%	6	20.0%	16	32.0%
Pro-war	27	20.6%	8	23.5%	6	35.3%	6	20.0%	7	14.0%
Strongly pro	12	9.2%	5	14.4%	2	11.8%	2	6.7%	3	6.0%
	<u>131</u>		<u>34</u>		<u>17</u>		<u>30</u>		<u>50</u>	

Source: SPSS frequencies run on all editorials in the study.

The fourth major finding was that the overall tone of editorials in the study was anti-war, with 41.3% in this classification and only 29.8% graded as pro-war. While there was a definite upward trend in the number of anti-war editorials as the war progressed, further analysis of Tables 2 and 3 indicates significant variances by incident and individual newspaper. The Tet offensive skewed the trends in tone as well as in number of editorials, as pointed out above. While the overall trend line in pro-war editorials went down from 1964 to 1975, Tet created a jog in the curve, with 57.1% of the opinion on this incident classified as pro-war.

The Chicago Tribune printed the largest overall number of pro-war items, with 48% classified in this category, followed closely by the Wall Street Journal and the Los Angeles Times, each having 41% of their total editorials

rated as "pro-war." The Washington Post and New York Times printed the lowest number of pro-war pieces, with 26% and 12%, respectively graded in this category.

The New York Times was most strongly represented in the "anti-war" column with 63% of its editorials so classified, followed by the Post with 42% the Journal with 35%, the Los Angeles Times with 24% and the Tribune with 20%.

At the time of the Tet offensive the Post, Tribune and Los Angeles Times caused a skew in the upward trend of anti-war editorials between 1964 and 1975. On Tet, the Post's editorials were 100% pro-war, the Tribune's 80% pro-war and the Los Angeles Times' 50% pro-war. Neither the New York Times nor the Journal ran any pro-war items on Tet.

The fifth major finding was that the paper which most clearly appeared to have changed its editorial opinion over the period of the study was the Los Angeles Times. The Times ran 100% in the pro-war category on the Tonkin Gulf incident, dropped to 50% for Tet and Vietnamization, and had none so classified at the time of the fall of Saigon. When Saigon fell, the Times ran 57% of its items in the anti-war category.

At the other end of the spectrum, the New York Times showed the least amount of change, falling primarily in the anti-war category throughout the 1964-1975 period.

The Washington Post, with the exception of the skewing effect of the Tet offensive, steadily increased its anti-war position. Just as steadily, it decreased its pro-war items throughout the time period studied.

While the Chicago Tribune's percentage of pro-war editorials decreased steadily from 1968 to 1975, the decline was not a significant one until the fall of Saigon. Unlike the other newspapers examined, at no time did the percentage of anti-war editorials in the Tribune exceed those classified as pro-war. Even with the fall of Saigon and the American withdrawal from Vietnam, the

Tribune ran only one (9%) editorial classified as anti-war. In comparison, the Wall Street Journal, ranked lowest of the five papers, had three (30%) of its items classified as anti-war.

Interestingly, the Journal ran only neutral or anti-war editorials prior to 1969, when it began printing pro-war editorials in support of Nixon's Vietnamization announcement. This trend was in complete opposition to that of the other newspapers studied.

In 1969, the Journal was joined by the Los Angeles Times, Chicago Tribune and Washington Post in running pro-war commentaries. By 1975 the situation had changed and only the Tribune and Journal leaned more toward the hawks than the doves, with the Trib at least consistent with previous editorial policies.

The Journal was troubled by several aspects of the American withdrawal from Vietnam. It blamed the Soviets for escalation of the war through their sending in of weapons, "in gross violation of the Paris accords."¹¹ and asked what had happened to detente.

The Journal's greatest concern, reflected in two strongly pro-war editorials, seemed to be that American withdrawal from Vietnam would lead the Communist powers to a belief in U.S. military weakness. The editors felt that "freedom of the seas, and more broadly freedom of Americans to travel and trade in the world, is one of the bedrocks of American foreign policy."¹² The Journal quoted, as very encouraging, Senator Walter Mondale's comment, that, "It's very important not to signal the Russians and others that we're giving up," and concluded that "...refusal to vote sufficient funds for weapons procurement and research and development, in the name of an elusive detente, (was) irresponsible and dangerous."¹³

Table 4 emphasizes the newspapers' gradual but continued trend from

generally pro-war to generally anti-war attitudes. During the earlier years covered by this study the number and percentage of editorials of a pro-war nature which were placed in the lead position declined significantly. Similarly, the number of lead editorials classified as anti-war grew continuously over the period of the study. The same effect can be noted, though more gradually, in the editorials placed in other than the lead position.

Table 4 indicates that the placement of the items on the editorial page followed a predictable pattern. Lead editorials, and, with the exception of the Wall Street Journal, editorials which were allotted an entire column, contained the strongest opinions. In no incident other than the fall of Saigon did neutral editorials occupy more than 19% of the "lead" space on an editorial page. Saigon's large number of lead editorials is accounted for by the fact that 32% of the items on this incident were neutral in character.

From the data in Tables 5 and 6 it can be concluded that placement and content were more significant indicators of the newspapers' opinions than size. Analysis of the relationship between incident, general tone and editorial size did not show any meaningful trends, either of a descriptive or a statistical nature.

This study also analyzed specific words used in the editorials. The individual words chosen for examination within the context of this study are indicated as variables 11 through 23 in Appendix A. Analysis of the words has been limited to those words which appeared most often or whose lack of appearance was considered noteworthy.

The words most used in the editorials studied were communist, peace, attack, aggression and negotiation. "Communist" was a freely used word, appearing in a total of 82 editorials (62.6%). While not appearing in every editorial,

the word "communist" was used by every newspaper in the context of every incident. The word had been accepted in cold war terminology for many years, and thus, while descriptive of something undesirable, was certainly not considered too "hot" to use in the case of an undeclared war. In very few of the cases was this word used to describe anything in a favorable light.

The word "negotiation" was used by all of the newspapers and like "communist" was used in the context of every incident. It was used in a total of 31 (23.7%) of the editorials, and not surprisingly, out of the total of 31 usages, 15 (48.4%) were by the New York Times.

The word "peace" was used with relative frequency, appearing in 44 (33.6%) of the cases. Each newspaper made use of the word more than once and it was used in connection with every incident. The New York Times was the champion of "peace," using the word 18 (40.9%) of the times that it appeared. The Chicago Tribune was a "slow second," with only 10 (22.7%) editorial appearances.

As anticipated, the words "aggression" and "attack" were both used frequently and referred to those actions taken by the enemy against this nation and its allies. "Aggression" was used in 24 (18.3%) of the editorials, while "attack" was used in 23 (32.8%) of the items. Both words were used by all of the newspapers in connection with each of the incidents.

The words least used in the editorials in this study were enemy, American power, win, lose, victory, defeat and escalation.

"Enemy" was used in only 26 (19.8%) of the cases. It is interesting to note that while most of the newspapers only used this word in the context of incidents beginning with the 1968 Tet offensive, the Los Angeles Times used it in connection with Tonkin Gulf and once again in connection with Tet, though not using it in any other editorial. The other newspapers, perhaps not willing to

admit at this juncture that an enemy existed, used such phrases as "communists" and "North Vietnamese" to describe the *Maddox* attackers.

The term "American power" was used in only 23 of the cases in the study (17.6%). When used it generally represented 19th and early 20th century jingoism. Every newspaper used the term more than once and it appeared within the context of each of the incidents. The *New York Times* waved the term "naval and air supremacy of the United States," as having been fully demonstrated during the Tonkin Gulf Incident.¹⁴ The *Tribune* referred to "American military might" as having produced a white flag for the first time in connection with the fall of Saigon,¹⁵ but assured its readers that this country had the "military strength" to support any decision it might make.¹⁶

The word "ally" was used with about the same frequency as was "enemy," with the exception that it was used by each of the newspapers in connection with all of the incidents. "Ally" was used in 27 (20.6%) of the editorials, and based on its catholic usage, one might deduce that while this country could not have enemies in an undeclared war, it was permitted to have allies. The word "ally" did not turn out to be as "loaded" a war term as originally expected since several uses referred to the allies of Hanoi.

The prime definition of "win" is to "gain the victory in any contest; to triumph; prevail, succeed."¹⁷ For some inexplicable reason, this word was used in only eight (6.1%) of the surveyed editorials. The *Tribune* used it twice in connection with the Tonkin Gulf incident, once related to Tet, and once after the fall of Saigon. The *Wall Street Journal* used "win" only in one of its items relating to "Tonkin." The *New York Times* referred to the word one time in the context of Tet; the *Washington Post* once each, in reference to Vietnamization and the fall of Saigon; the *Los Angeles Times* not at all, in 17 editorials

over the entire period.

"Winning" was obviously not a popular word with editorial writers, but the word "losing" was even less so. At no time during the study did any of the editorials contain the word "losing." The possibility exists that the editors were too literal and failed to use the word because its first definition is "to bring to destruction; to ruin,"--it is not until the sixth usage that "to fail to gain or win" is used. It can be supposed that the possibility of this country's "losing" an undeclared war was not to be considered while the fact that it suffered a defeat, a word that was used, was acceptable to the newspapers--or unavoidable.

"Victory" was a more acceptable word, appearing in 27 (20.6%) of the editorials. Every paper used the word at least once and it appeared in the context of every incident. The word "victory" was used in editorials of every tone from strongly anti-war to strongly pro-war and was modified by such words as Communist, cold war, great and American. It was not as strong a word as anticipated.

While the word "defeat" was used, it was not used with significant frequency, appearing in only 12 (9.2%) of the editorials. The word was used by The Chicago Tribune in connection with Tet, Vietnamization and the fall of Saigon; by the Journal only concerning Vietnamization; and by the New York Times in five of its items at the time of the fall of Saigon. The Los Angeles Times and the Washington Post failed to use "defeat" at all. The word "defeat" was used over almost the entire tonal spectrum, from strongly anti-war to pro-war.

"Escalation" was another infrequently used word, appearing in only seven (5.3%) of the editorials. It was used by the papers as might have been expected in the framework of this study. When seeking to brand the Com-

munists as aggressors, to be repelled and defeated, the *Tribune* quite appropriately referred to their escalation of the war. The *New York Times*, on the other hand, was equally correct in using this "charged" word as part of its anti-war warnings when it spoke of "the constant risk of further costly and dangerous escalation."¹⁸

Summary and Conclusions

- The overall tone of the editorials was anti-war.
- The *Chicago Tribune*, the *Los Angeles Times* and *Washington Post* trended from pro-war to anti-war during the time frame covered. The *New York Times* was consistently anti-war. The *Wall Street Journal* trended from anti-war to pro-war.
- The newspapers were willing to take definite stands during the period under study.
- The paper which most clearly appeared to have changed its editorial opinion was the *Los Angeles Times*.
- The *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, both generally prolific in their editorials throughout the period of the study, inexplicably presented fewer items on the Tet offensive than the other papers.

This study has examined in some detail the editorial coverage of five newspapers as it concerned four widely separated incidents during U.S. involvement in the Vietnam war. While clearly demonstrating the editorial trends of the various newspapers and the individual aspects (placement, size, tone) which made up these trends, the study, by necessity lacked sufficient data to prove these conclusively. Further investigation must be made with data concerning

additional incidents occurring at dates in between those examined in this study. With this study serving as a model, further research, with a lengthened time period following each incident during which editorials could be gathered and analyzed, should prove meaningful.

One more point established by the study was the practical application of the SPSS package, which is the easiest for a non-technical researcher to use, to this specific problem of newspaper content analysis. The computer can be an extremely useful tool to the social scientist as long as the machine does not divert attention from the study of people to the study of numbers. Many new hypotheses can be created and old ones corroborated--or contradicted--with the only limitations being coding techniques and the degree of inventiveness possessed by the researcher.

Table 4
Placement of Editorial, by Tone

	Tonkin Gulf					1968 Tet Offensive					Nixon's Vietnamization					Fall of Saigon				
	Strongly Anti	Anti-war	Neutral	Pro-war	Strongly Pro	Strongly Anti	Anti-war	Neutral	Pro-war	Strongly Pro	Strongly Anti	Anti-war	Neutral	Pro-war	Strongly Pro	Strongly Anti	Anti-war	Neutral	Pro-war	Strongly Pro
<i>Lead Editorial</i>	14%	14%	19%	29%	24%	20%	20%	10%	40%	10%	39%	28%	17%	11%	6%	33%	21%	27%	15%	3%
Chicago Tribune	2	0	1	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	2	1
Wall Street Journal	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	1	0	2	1	0
Los Angeles Times	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	0
New York Times	0	2	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	7	2	0	0	0	2	4	2	2	0
Washington Post	1	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	2	0	1	5	2	1	0	0
<i>Other Placement</i>	8%	8%	67%	17%	0%	14%	14%	28%	28%	14%	17%	17%	25%	33%	8%	25%	13%	44%	6%	13%
Chicago Tribune	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	4	0	0
Wall Street Journal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	2
Los Angeles Times	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	2	0	0
New York Times	1	0	4	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0
Washington Post	0	1	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0

Source: SPSS Crosstabulation run, using the entire number of editorial cases studied. No meaningful significance was noted in Chi-square calculations. This table includes only 129 of the cases. Two of the editorials were allotted the entire editorial page. Both of these were run in the Wall Street Journal. The first, on Tonkin Gulf, was neutral, and the second, on the Fall of Saigon, was pro-war.

Table 5
Relationship Between Incident and Editorial
Size, by Newspaper

	<u>Tonkin- Gulf</u>	<u>1968 Tet Offensive</u>	<u>Nixon's Viet- namization</u>	<u>Fall of Saigon</u>
<i>Chicago Tribune</i>				
2.5 to 9.0 inches	1	2	1	3
9.3 to 12.8 inches	0	1	2	1
13.0 to 33.5 inches	5	2	0	7
<i>Wall Street Journal</i>				
2.5 to 9.0 inches	0	0	0	1
9.3 to 12.8 inches	0	1	0	2
13.0 to 33.5 inches	2	0	4	7
<i>Los Angeles Times</i>				
2.5 to 9.0 inches	0	2	0	2
9.3 to 12.8 inches	0	0	1	5
13.0 to 33.5 inches	4	2	1	0
<i>New York Times</i>				
2.5 to 9.0 inches	6	1	6	7
9.3 to 12.8 inches	5	3	5	6
13.0 to 33.5 inches	0	1	1	0
<i>Washington Post</i>				
2.5 to 9.0 inches	8	0	2	2
9.3 to 12.8 inches	1	0	4	7
13.0 to 33.5 inches	2	2	3	0

Source: SPSS crosstabulation run. Some significance was noted in Chi square calculations for the large editorials, relating newspaper and incident (13.0 to 33.5 inches). No meaningful significance was noted in Chi-square calculations in either of the other two size classifications.

Table 6
Relationship Between Incident and Editorial
Size, by Newspaper, by Tone
2.5 to 9.0 Inches

	<u>Tonkin Gulf</u>	<u>1968 Tet Offensive</u>	<u>Nixon's Viet- namization</u>	<u>Fall of Saigon</u>
<i>Chicago Tribune</i>				
Strongly Anti	0	0	0	0
Anti-war	0	0	0	0
Neutral	0	0	0	3
Pro-war	1	2	1	0
Strongly Pro	0	0	0	0
<i>Wall-Street Journal</i>				
Strongly Anti	0	0	0	1
Anti-war	0	0	0	0
Neutral	0	0	0	0
Pro-war	0	0	0	0
Strongly Pro	0	0	0	0
<i>Los Angeles Times</i>				
Strongly Anti	0	0	0	1
Anti-war	0	0	0	0
Neutral	0	1	0	1
Pro-war	0	1	0	0
Strongly Pro	0	0	0	0
<i>New York Times</i>				
Strongly Anti	0	0	4	1
Anti-war	1	0	1	3
Neutral	3	1	0	2
Pro-war	1	0	1	1
Strongly Pro	1	0	0	0
<i>Washington Post</i>				
Strongly Anti	1	0	0	2
Anti-war	1	0	0	0
Neutral	4	0	2	0
Pro-war	2	0	0	0
Strongly Pro	0	0	0	0

Source: SPSS cross tabulation run. No meaningful significance was noted in Chi-square calculations.

Table 6 (Cont'd.)
Relationship Between Incident and Editorial
Size, by Newspaper, by Tone
9.3 to 12.8 Inches

	<u>Tonkin Gulf</u>	<u>1968 Tet Offensive</u>	<u>Nixon's Viet- namization</u>	<u>Fall of Saigon?</u>
<i>Chicago Tribune</i>				
Strongly Anti	0	0	0	0
Anti-war	0	0	1	0
Neutral	0	0	0	0
Pro-war	0	0	0	1
Strongly Pro	0	1	1	0
<i>Wall Street Journal</i>				
Strongly Anti	0	1	0	0
Anti-war	0	0	0	0
Neutral	0	0	0	0
Pro-war	0	0	0	1
Strongly Pro	0	0	0	1
<i>Los Angeles Times</i>				
Strongly Anti	0	0	0	2
Anti-war	0	0	0	1
Neutral	0	0	0	2
Pro-war	0	0	1	0
Strongly Pro	0	0	0	0
<i>New York Times</i>				
Strongly Anti	1	2	4	2
Anti-war	1	1	1	2
Neutral	3	0	0	1
Pro-war	0	0	0	1
Strongly Pro	0	0	0	0
<i>Washington Post</i>				
Strongly Anti	0	0	0	4
Anti-war	0	0	1	2
Neutral	0	0	1	1
Pro-war	1	0	1	0
Strongly Pro	0	0	1	0

Source: SPSS cross tabulation run. No meaningful significance was noted in Chi-square calculations.

Table 6 (Cont'd.)
Relationship Between Incident and Editorial
Size, by Newspaper, by Tone
13.0 to 33.5 Inches

	<u>Tonkin Gulf</u>	<u>1968 Tet- Offensive</u>	<u>Nixon's Viet- namization</u>	<u>Fall of Saigon</u>
<i>Chicago Tribune</i>				
Strongly Anti	2	0	0	0
Anti-war	0	1	0	1
Neutral	1	0	0	4
Pro-war	2	0	0	1
Strongly Pro	0	1	0	1
<i>Wall Street Journal</i>				
Strongly Anti	0	0	0	2
Anti-war	1	0	1	0
Neutral	1	0	1	2
Pro-war	0	0	2	2
Strongly Pro	0	0	0	1
<i>Los Angeles Times</i>				
Strongly Anti	0	0	0	0
Anti-war	0	0	0	0
Neutral	0	1	1	0
Pro-war	1	1	0	0
Strongly Pro	3	0	0	0
<i>New York Times</i>				
Strongly Anti	0	0	1	0
Anti-war	0	1	0	0
Neutral	0	0	0	0
Pro-war	0	0	0	0
Strongly Pro	0	0	0	0
<i>Washington Post</i>				
Strongly Anti	0	0	0	0
Anti-war	0	0	2	0
Neutral	1	0	1	0
Pro-war	0	2	0	0
Strongly Pro	1	0	0	0

Source: SPSS crosstabulation run. No meaningful significance was noted in Chi-square calculations.

FOOTNOTES

1. "Spectrum. A Reporter Looks Back: The CIA and the Fall of Saigon," *Washington Journalism Review*, January/February, 1978, pp. 18,19.
2. Peter Braestrup, *Big Story, How the American Press and Television Reported and Interpreted the Crisis of Tet 1968 in Vietnam and Washington*, (1977); Tom Wicker, *On Press*, (1978).
3. "The Ten Best American Dailies," *Time*, January 21, 1974, pp. 58-61. Several things were used by *Time's* editors in selecting the "ten best," including efforts to cover national and international news in addition to a paper's own community; entertainment value accompanying information; willingness to risk money and manpower on extended investigations; and the offering of a wide range of divergent opinion in "Op-Ed" pages and dissenting columns. The selection was made on the basis of editorial excellence, and not commercial success, although all of the papers chosen were economically sound.
4. These events are discussed at length in F.A. Poole, *The United States and Indochina, From FDR to Nixon*, (1973); B.B. Fall, *Last Reflections on a War*, (1967); B.B. Fall, *Viet-Nam Witness 1953-66*, (1966) and T. Hoopes, *The Limits of Intervention*, (1969).
5. O.R. Holsti, *Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities*, (1969), p. 28.
6. The statistics have been slightly skewed by the fact that nine (6.9%) of the editorials concerning the fall of Saigon also included comment on the capture of the American freighter Mayaguez. The Mayaguez incident occurred in April, 1975. Some of the nine editorials were heavily concerned with the Mayaguez incident but all of them were connected in some way to the American withdrawal from Vietnam. Editorials which concerned themselves only with the Mayaguez were omitted from the study.
7. "Bloody Path to Peace?," *New York Times*, 1 February 1968, p. 36.
8. Ibid.
9. "Rationalizing the Vietnam Rampage," *Washington Post*, 1 February 1968, p. A20.
10. "Terms for a Bombing Halt," *Washington Post*, 3 February 1968, p. A12.
11. "Whatever Happened to Detente?," *Wall Street Journal*, 30 April 1975, p. 20.
12. "Retrieving the Mayaguez," *Wall Street Journal*, 14 May 1975, p. 14. *Italics mine.*
13. "Rethinking the Military Budget," *Wall Street Journal*, 13 May 1975, p. 14.

14. "Intelligence on Vietnam," *New York Times*, 24 August 1964, p. 26.
 15. "The Message from Koh Tang," *Chicago Tribune*, 16 May 1975, Sec. 2, p. 2.
 16. "Defining our Commitments," *Chicago Tribune*, 18 May 1975, Sec. 2, p. 4.
 17. *Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, Fifth Edition, (1946).
 18. "Bloody Path to Peace," *New York Times*, 1 February 1968, p. 36.
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Appendix A

Code Book and Variables List

Variable

Code

1

Case number - three digits.

2

Newspaper - two digits.

- 01 Chicago Tribune
- 02 Wall Street Journal
- 03 Los Angeles Times
- 04 New York Times
- 05 Washington Post

3

Date of editorial - six digits - should have year placed first. i.e. 690201. (February 2, 1969)

4

Incident - two digits.

- 01 Tonkin Gulf Incident
- 02 1968 Tet Offensive
- 03 Nixon's Vietnamization Proposal
- 04 Fall of Saigon

5

Number of column inches in each editorial - three digits - to be expressed in inches and tenths of inches. Eight and one-half inches should be coded as 085; ten and one-half inches coded as 105.

6

Overall tone of editorial - two digits.

- 01 Strongly anti-war
- 02 Anti-war
- 03 Neutral
- 04 Pro-war
- 05 Strongly pro-war

7

Placement of editorial on Op-Ed. page - two digits.

- 01 Entire editorial column
- 02 Lead editorial
- 03 Other placement in editorial column

8

Number of pro-war themes or phrases - one digit.

9

Number of neutral themes or phrases - one digit.

VariableCode

10

Number of pro-war themes or phrases -
one digit.

11

Pre-selected word list - one digit.

1 Word used in editorial

0 Word not used in editorial

Enemy.

12

Communist.

13

American power (includes such other words
or phrases as: U.S. air power, U.S. naval
and air supremacy, American military
might, and world's greatest power).

14

Peace or peaceful.

15

Ally, allies, allied, alliance.

16

Winning or won.

17

Losing.

18

Victory or victors.

19

Defeat or defeatism.

20

Escalation.

21

Negotiate or negotiation.

22

Aggression, aggressor, or aggressiveness.

23

Attack.

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